



MAINE JUDICIAL BRANCH
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

PORTLAND OFFICE
P.O. Box 4820
Portland, ME 04112-4820
Phone: 207-822-0792
Fax: 207-776-6096

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Amy Quinlan, Esq., Director of Court Communications
Phone: (207) 822-0767
Email: amy.quinlan@courts.maine.gov

Maine Judicial Branch Ensures Social Distancing by Revising Court Procedures for Arraignments

January 15, 2021. The Maine Judicial Branch announced today that it has revised court procedures for walk-in arraignments and created timelines for the filing of criminal complaints. The changes in revised [PMO-SJC-1](#) are being implemented to limit courtroom capacity to ensure social distancing during arraignments (which may involve large numbers of people) at Judicial Branch Facilities. The new procedures will be effective January 18, 2021.

New procedures include the following:

- All criminal complaints and summonses must be filed with the clerk's office at least 14 days before the scheduled arraignment date. The only exception is for new criminal complaints for persons who are in custody and have not made bail on the new charges.
- In addition, to limit the number of people present in the courtroom at one time, each law enforcement agency will be assigned specific arraignment dates and allotted a set number of defendants who can be summonsed for each arraignment date. Once the maximum number is reached, the law enforcement agency will be required to use the next available date on its schedule of arraignment dates.
- Although arraignments will be scheduled for specific dates, locations, and times, any person with a court date for any purpose (including police departments and officers) **should check the Judicial Branch website to confirm that the courthouse is open before coming to the courthouse.** A **Court Alerts** link to courthouse closures due to weather, a COVID-19 exposure, or other emergency appears at the top of each page on the Judicial Branch website when **Court Alerts** are in effect.

The full text of PMO-SJC-1, the 2021 Dates for Arraignment, Initial Appearance and Unpaid Fines, and Arraignment Slots for Police Departments may be found [HERE](#).

###

